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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT
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U. S. DEPARTME
OF AGRICULTU
OFFICE OF INFORMATI

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SUBJECT: CHECK UP ON THE WASHING MACHINE

Information from the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

No question about it. The family washing machine's had hard and steady use these past few years. And if you haven't made a check up of your machine recently, home equipment specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture suggest that you list that task on your schedule for right away.

It'll be sometime before new machines are available and since you'll have to make the one you have do, you may be interested in these tips for a check up of your washing machine.

First step in keeping the machine in good condition is to know it. One of the best guides for caring for the machine is found in the manufacturer's directions. Even if you've used the machine many times, reread the directions to be sure you've overlooked no point that may save the machine and give the best results.

Whether your washing machine is old or new, run by hand, electricity or gasoline, look it over periodically to see that all bolts and screws in the frame are tight.

In many machines, parts of the motor and gears are permanently lubricated at the factory and need no further attention. In others, the homemaker must take care of the periodic lubrication. The manufacturer's directions usually tell how much to oil the machine if you use it once a week. If you wash oftener, you may need to oil more frequently. And remember that too much or the wrong kind of oil is just as harmful as too little oil.

Take care not to spill oil on any rubber parts. Oil softens and ruins rubber. In case you do spill some oil on the rubber, remove the oil immediately with soap and water and then rinse the rubber in clear water and dry with a soft cloth.

And if something should cause the machine to tip and spill oil from inside the mechanism, have a serviceman check the machine and replace the spilled oil if necessary. It's a good idea to have your machine checked by a serviceman at least once a year. Usually you save by repairing or replacing the worn parts before they give way entirely.

And here are some pointers on the operation of the machine.

If the washer has been standing in a cold place, the oil or grease in an electric or engine-driven machine may be too stiff to lubricate the mechanism as it runs. In that case, bring the machine into a warm room for a few hours, or let the tub stand full of warm water for an hour before you start washing. Never pour hot water into a very cold porcelain enamel tub. Sudden changes in temperature may crack porcelain enamel.

For safety with an electric washer, stand on a dry floor and have dry hands when you connect the plug. To disconnect, grasp the plug not the cord. Keep the electric outlet in good repair and keep the cord clean and dry - away from the sun, heat and oil. Never roll the washer over the cord. Repair the cord or plug as soon as a broken or worn place shows.

If your washer blows a fuse, replace with a 15-ampere fuse. Too large a fuse may cause the motor to be injured or burned out before the fuse blows.

Your machine is designed to hold a definite amount of water and to wash a definite load of clothes. Too much water may strain the motor or run down the center shaft into the oil and gear case. Too many clothes in the machine may strain the motor or cause the fuse to blow.

Before every washing, test the safety-pressure release on the wringer to be sure it's working. Wringers on some machines have self-adjusting rollers that

automatically set according to the thickness of the clothes. Too much pressure strains clothes, wringer and motor. Protect the wringer and the clothes by running pieces through the wringer in smooth folds. Save the rubber rollers and clothes b; folding buckles, zippers and buttons inside the cloth.

Go easy on the drier. Too much vibration is hard on the centrifugal drier. Cut down vibration by packing the clothes into the drier a few at a time so that the weight is even all around.

And now for after-washing care of the machine. The moment you finish wringin; release the pressure on the wringer rollers to save the rubber. Flat spots on rollers come from leaving rolls pressed together.

After every wash, clean and dry the rollers. If they're easy to remove, take them out, wash in warm soapy water, rinse in clear water, wipe dry and replace. If the rollers don't come out easily, wash, rinse and dry them in place. Take off any stains with a cloth dipped in dry-cleaning fluid. Remove all lint from the drain screen. And save the rubber, be sure all water is out of the hose.

When the washing is done, drain out the water and remove the washing mechanism, if it can be taken out. With warm soapy water, wash the inside of the tub and the shaft of the washing machine. Rub stubborn spots with a fine scouring powder. If green verdigris collects on a copper tub, rub it off with a paste of soap and household ammonia. Wash outside of the tub with soap and water, rinse and dry. If the finish is synthetic enamel, wax it every few months to save the finish. Wax protects wood and metal parts of the frame too.

After the machine is dry, cover it. Covers of waterproof cloth are best for machines kept on open porches or other exposed places. A cover protects the machine from dirt and damp, and even if the machine is kept in a protected place, have a cover for the wringer to protect the rubber.

Make your washing machine last longer. Keep it in order. Use it without waste. The United States Department of Agriculture has a folder giving simple rules to help make your washing machine last and give best service. Copies are free.

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